



Remarks For

The Hon. Jovita Carranza
Deputy Administrator
U.S. Small Business Administration

Delivered At The

GSA SMALL BUSINESS OUTREACH EVENT

New Orleans, LA

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9:00 AM

Good morning. I'm glad to see that all of you made it here this morning. I want to thank Administrator Doan for all of her efforts to make sure that small businesses are well represented in GSA contracting. We have a great program today, and I encourage you to take advantage of all of the resources available, both here today through SBA and our resource partners, through GSA and its new website, acquisition.gov.

This event today is about helping small businesses, but it's also a part of the rebuilding process for New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region. Small businesses play an integral role in driving our economy by creating jobs, and they play that same essential role here.

Since 2006, the Women's Business Centers and Small Business Development Centers - both SBA resource partners - have assisted over 650 new businesses, in addition to about 2000 entrepreneurs. Over 11,000 employees were represented among those 2600 companies, and those companies totaled nearly \$400 million in sales and procured about 24 million in SBA loans. These numbers are reflective of the excellent effort on behalf of some very dedicated resource partners.

Getting the city's small businesses back on their feet is an important part of the rebuilding process. We can help small businesses recover by ensuring that they receive a share of the government. This continues to be a priority for our Louisiana office.

I'd specifically like to speak about what is happening with SBA in this area right now. The SBA Louisiana District has had an unprecedented year in guaranteed bank financings. This is forward money, and this is really about recovery and hope. We are proud of the efforts of Gene Cornelius and the rest of the District staff in making this happen.

Today's event is the result of SBA and GSA working together more closely. Administrator Doan and I have worked hard to increase collaboration between our agencies ... particularly in the area of small business contracting.

Just after Katrina, SBA dedicated personnel to assist in identifying small business contracting opportunities to get relief, reconstruction contracts, as well as to identify subcontracting opportunities in the Gulf Coast Region.

We are leveraging the resources of both agencies in order to help small businesses. By developing working relationships between the staffs of SBA and GSA, we can increase outreach to, and support for, small businesses.

We have 514 new contracts directly related to Katrina recovery between April 15th and July 31st and of those, 437 went to small businesses for a total of \$242.6 million out of \$279 million. That's over 87 percent of government contracts going to small business for that period.

Today's event can be used as a model for others throughout the country. The federal government spent more than \$340 billion on goods and services last fiscal year, and small businesses deserve a fair shake in the procurement process. But as you all understand very well it's not only about fairness; it's about good business practices. It is extremely important for us to work with local communities to insure that small business contracts go to businesses in the local area. One thing we are doing is to expand the district offices role in the contracting effort. We are working with other federal agencies to focus on opportunities that will allow us to better focus post disaster contracting toward small businesses. We are looking for better ways in which we can further assist women, minority and disabled veteran owned businesses, in particular. We strive to do better; we are trying to find solutions alongside the GSA, Department of Homeland Security, and other agencies involved with disaster relief.

Small companies, however, cannot bring the same level of marketing and sales resources as their larger competitors. So we have to take steps to ensure they can compete. Outreach events like this are one way we can help do that, and SBA has hosted numerous other outreach, recruiting, and matchmaking events throughout the region.

I'll leave you with this thought as you go through your activities today:
Government contracts can spur innovation and invigorate entrepreneurship, and that's especially important here in New Orleans, as the city continues on its road to recovery. Today's event is the result of SBA and GSA working together more closely. Administrator Doan and I have worked hard to increase collaboration between 2 agencies particularly in the area of small business contracting. Securing government contracts helps grow your business, but it is also a part of rebuilding your community.